

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV : (a) to (g). The Import of sugar is the calendar year 1994 became necessary to meet the shortfall in the sugar production season 1st October, 93 - 30th September, 94 and the consequent reduced availability of supply under the Public Distribution System. A quantity of about 9.77 lakh tonnes was imported by STC & MMTC during the calendar year 1994. As firm production trends were not available in the early part of the sugar season beginning 1st October, 94 the Government directed STC & MMTC to enter into Forward Contracts for import of about 5 lakh tonnes of Sugar with a view to ensure adequate availability of sugar for Public Distribution System, in the event of sugar production not coming upto the expected level. Against this, STC & MMTC contracted for a quantity of about 4.09 lakh tonnes. However, as it became evident that a high level of production was likely to be achieved in 1994-95 season, the Government directed STC & MMTC to dispose off in the International Market as much of the contracted sugar as possible at the best possible price. Consequently, only a quantity of 1.99 lakh MT (approx.) was imported in 1995.

The imported sugar was meant for distribution through Public Distribution System and was accordingly issued to the consumers at the issue price of Rs.9.05 per kg. While accounts are yet to be finalised, amounts of Rs.591 crores and Rs.164 crores have been paid by way of subsidy during the financial years 1994-95 and 1995-96 respectively to cover the differential between the cost of imports and distribution on the one hand and price realisation through Public Distribution System on the other hand. As the import was undertaken to preclude the possibility of a break-down in the Public Distribution System, the question of fixation of responsibility for any loss does not arise.

As regards the export of sugar, in view of the higher level of production actually achieved in the Sugar season 1994-95 and still higher production in 1995-96 seasons, resulting in surplus availability of sugar, the Government decided to allow export of sugar from August'95 onwards so as to enable the sugar mills to liquidate their inventories and improve their financial position with a view to pay the cane growers their dues.

#### **International Airport at NOIDA**

\*309. SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY :  
KUMARI UMA BHARATI :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to set up an International Airport and modern cargo maintenance centre at NOIDA in Uttar Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

[English]

#### **AI and IA Pilots**

\*310. SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT. : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) the number of pilots who left the services of Air India and Indian Airlines during the last three years;

(b) the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government propose to call back all such pilots;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the extra benefits proposed to be given to them?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) and (b). While Air India has not experienced any large scale exodus of pilots, 97 pilots resigned from Indian Airlines during 1993 to 1995 and 12 pilots resigned from India Airlines during 1993 to 1995 and 12 pilots who had earlier resigned joined back. No pilot has left in 1996 so far. No reasons were given by the Pilots at the time of leaving the organisation.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e). Do not arise.

#### **Cordless Telecommunication Technology**

\*311. SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether some European telecom companies have activated an international forum in India to promote digital enhanced cordless telecommunication technology;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) its likely impact on Indian Telecom Companies; and

(d) the benefits likely to be accrued therefrom to the rural and backward areas of the country?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) and (b). Sir, it has been reported that five companies namely, Alcatel, Ericsson, Nokia, Philips and Siemens have formed a forum.

(c) and (d). Provides of basic telecom services can use this technology for wireless in local loop depending

upon their perception of the comparative advantages in different situations, including rural and backward areas.

#### **Wakf Properties**

\*312. KUMARI MAMTA BANERJEE : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the Wakf properties are being illegally sold and transferred throughout the country; and

(b) if so, the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to save the Wakf properties?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) The Government have no information regarding illegal sale or transfer of Wakf properties except in respect of West Bengal. The Government of West Bengal have confirmed the receipt of complaints regarding mismanagement of Wakf properties and institution of a departmental enquiry to look into them. But the report of the departmental enquiry has not been received although there have been references in the Press about such a report and discussion of the matter in the State Legislative Assembly.

(b) Safeguards have been provided in the Wakf Act, 1995 to save Wakf properties from illegal sale/transfer, vide Sections 51 and 52 of the said Act.

#### **Monitoring of Foreign Aircrafts**

\*313. SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Director General of Civil Aviation had been asked to strictly monitor the country's air space to prevent entry of foreign aircraft, violating accepted international norms and threatening the country's security;

(b) if so, whether the Government are aware of the fact that in June, 1996, two Pakistani Planes had entered in a very low range into Indian territory (Kargil area of Jammu and Kashmir) for the preparation of maps of Indian territory; and

(c) if so, the details of the protest made from Indian side and the response from Pakistan thereto?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

#### **Privatisation of Postal Services**

\*314. SHRI AMAR PAL SINGH : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any proposal is under consideration of

the Government for privatisation of postal services as reported in the 'Economic Times' dated July 2, 1996;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of private agencies proposed to be licenced for the purpose; and

(d) which type of postal services are proposed to be assigned to these agencies?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : As mentioned briefly in the news items in Economic Times dated the 2nd July, 1996 the Department of Post, in order to provide basic postal facility like sale of stamps and stationery extensively, has been allowing licenced agents to operate under specified terms and conditions.

The following agency systems are presently in operation :

*Licensed Postal Agency* : This scheme, in operation since 1985, allows licenced agents to sell stamps and stationery and book registered articles. The agent is paid a percentage commission on the amount of stamps and stationery sold, and commission per registered article booked.

Keeping in view the staff opposition to the scheme, no new licence under this scheme is being issued since 1987. However, the agents given licences before the scheme was held in abeyance continue to operate.

*Licensed Stamp Vendor* : This scheme, introduced in 1969, was initially for headquarter towns of Heads of Postal Circles, and since 1983, is extended to all areas. The scheme permits any individual, firm or society to take an agency for sale of stamps and stationery. STD/ISD/PCO booth holders are also eligible for this scheme.

Licence under this scheme is issued by the Head of Postal Division, subject to fulfilment of prescribed conditions. No Target is set for this purpose.

*Panchayat Sanchar Sewa Yojana* : This scheme, introduced in 1995, has been devised to provide basic postal services in areas not having such services and justifying opening of a post office. In this scheme, the Gram Panchayat of the Village where post office is justified is allowed to set up Panchayat Sanchar Sewa Kendra to provide sale of stamps and stationery, booking of registered articles, delivery of unaccountable articles in the village, and facility for small savings schemes.

A target of 250 Panchayat Sanchar Sewa Kendras has been set for the year 1996-97.

#### **Abolition of Child Labour**

\*315. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether despite constitutional provisions and fresh emphasis on abolition of child labour, they continue to be employed in hazardous industries of the country;